

# Is your well water **SAFE** and **CLEAN** to drink?

Here's how to test the quality of your well water to protect your household:

## DIY

Learn how to sample and what contaminants to sample for. Get sampling equipment from a lab and/or free bottles from Southwest District Health. Transport or mail the sample to the lab, or drop it off at SWDH for a nominal courier fee.

*Cost estimate:* \$18 -225 lab fee per contaminant tested

## PROFESSIONAL

A SWDH specialist comes to your property to collect a sample and helps interpret the lab results.

*Cost estimate:* \$100 + nominal courier fee + lab testing fees paid directly to lab

Private, certified, regional labs can also fulfill this role, including but not limited to:

- Analytical Laboratories (Boise) [AnalyticalLabsInc.com](http://AnalyticalLabsInc.com)
- Magic Valley Labs (Twin Falls) [MagicValleyLabs.com](http://MagicValleyLabs.com)
- Anatek Labs (Moscow) [AnatekLabs.com](http://AnatekLabs.com)

FREE PRIVATE WELL CARE  
AND SAFETY COURSE



LOCAL PRIVATE WELL  
RESOURCES



HOW TO SAMPLE YOUR  
WELL WATER



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QUALITY NEAR ME



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to help!

208-455-5400  
[swdh.org](http://swdh.org)



## ARE WELL WATER CONTAMINANTS HARMFUL?

Some contaminants are believed to be related to various illnesses and diseases that have been shown to cause cancer, although health implications vary and depend on age and the chemical component being analyzed. Also, nitrates are particularly dangerous if ingested by infant children aged 6 months or less.

## WHAT WELL WATER CONTAMINANTS TYPICALLY EXIST IN SOUTHWEST IDAHO?

In the six counties that SWDH serves, depending on the area, high amounts of nitrate, nitrite, arsenic, fluoride, and uranium can be found due to reasons ranging from natural geologic activity to human activities.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF CONTAMINANTS ARE FOUND IN MY WELL WATER?

Stop using the well water for human consumption. Use only bottled water or an alternative potable water source for drinking, cooking, and washing until the water is remediated, tested again, and deemed safe to drink. Contact a veterinarian for questions related to pets or livestock. Depending on the contaminant, remediation options include simple filtration to complex treatment systems like reverse osmosis, distillation, ultraviolet, and water softeners that address contaminants like bacteria, metals, chemicals, and organic matter.

## HOW MUCH CAN IT COST TO REMEDIATE THE CONTAMINATION AND MAKE MY WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Depending on the contaminant, remediation costs can range from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands of dollars, and/or possibly include drilling a new well.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I TEST MY WELL WATER FOR CONTAMINANTS?

Minimum Tests Recommended for Private Wells										
Test	Frequency	County								
		Ada	Adams	Southern Adams	Canyon	Gem	Northern Gem	Owyhee	Payette	Washington
Arsenic	Every 3-5 years	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fluoride	Every 3-5 years			X			X	X		
Nitrate	Annually	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Coliform/E.coli	Annually	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lead and Copper	Every 3-5 years	Household plumbing contains lead or copper								

\*Source: Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

## AM I LEGALLY REQUIRED TO TEST MY PRIVATE, DOMESTIC WELL?

No. Private, domestic wells are not regulated in Idaho. Well maintenance and water quality are the property owner's responsibility. For your safety, we recommend taking the FREE private well owner course to learn more: [privatewellclass.org](http://privatewellclass.org)